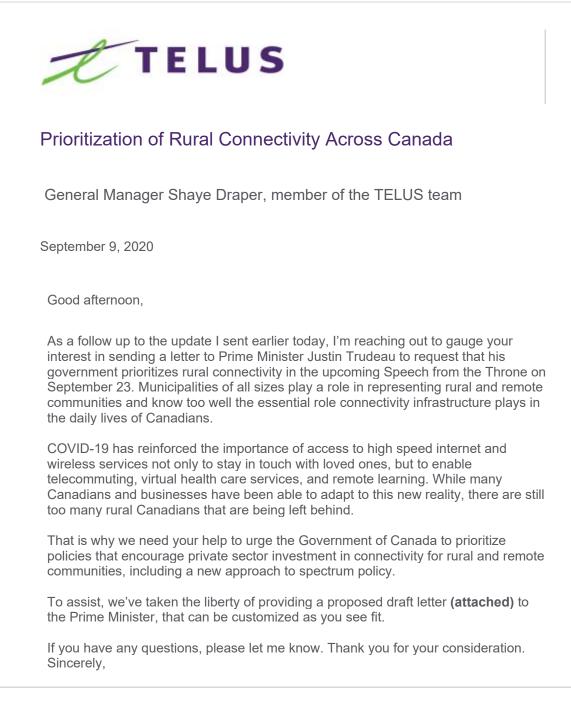
## Subject:

FW: Prioritization of Rural Connectivity Across Canada

From: Jennifer Lastiwka [mailto:Jennifer.Lastiwka@telus.com] On Behalf Of Shaye Draper Sent: September 9, 2020 3:07 PM To: Shaye Draper <<u>Shaye.Draper@telus.com</u>> Subject: Prioritization of Rural Connectivity Across Canada Importance: High



Shaye

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Distributed to all AB & BC municipalities, RDs UBCM and AUMA

September XX, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P. Prime Minister of Canada Office of the Prime Minister 80 Wellington Street Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

By email: pm@pm.gc.ca CC: Chrystia.Freeland@canada.ca (Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Finance) CC: ISI.minister-ministre.ISI@canada.ca (Hon. Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry) CC: Alyx.holland@pmo-cpm.gc.ca; ryan.dunn@canada.ca; elder.marques@canada.ca; jeremy.broadhurst@dpmo-cvpm.gc.ca

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of [INSERT NAME OF MUNICIPALITY], I am writing to you to raise the urgent need for increased rural connectivity, and to ask that you **prioritize rural connectivity in the upcoming Speech from the Throne** on September 23. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the essential role connectivity services play in the daily lives of Canadians, not only to stay in touch with loved ones, but to telecommute, access virtual health care services, and enable remote learning. While many Canadians and businesses have been able to adapt to the new reality we find ourselves in, there are still too many rural Canadians that are being left behind.

As you prepare to lay out the Government of Canada's priorities in the Speech from the Throne, we urge you to prioritize policies that **encourage private sector investment in connectivity for rural and remote communities.** The need for new or improved broadband connectivity in [MUNICIPALITY], and communities like ours, is urgent.

To deliver better connectivity to our communities – and all of rural Canada – we ask that the federal government encourage rural network investment and deployment by:

- 1. **Expediting the 3500 MHz and 3800 MHz spectrum auctions** so that this spectrum can be put to use for all Canadians, sooner;
- 2. Imposing meaningful deployment conditions across accelerated timelines to all spectrum holders. For example, a "**use it or lose it**" **spectrum policy** that requires greater rural deployment within five years of a license grant, where failure to build results in forfeiture of that license;
- 3. Ending the use of spectrum set asides, particularly for rural areas, as set-aside eligible telecoms companies do not have a track record of deploying in rural Canada, and that spectrum goes unused; and
- 4. Continuing to invest in rural connectivity programs by launching the Universal Broadband Fund, supporting the CRTC Broadband Fund, and identifying opportunities to match or **coordinate funding programs with the provinces**.

We can no longer afford delays to the roll out of wireless connectivity. We hope that you will include rural connectivity as a key priority in the Speech from the Throne. We ask that these commitments be reflected in new ministerial mandate letters, reflecting your government's commitment to **encourage private sector investment in connectivity for** [INSERT NAME OF MUNICIPALITY], and all of rural Canada.

I look forward to hearing from you on how your government is going to prioritize rural connectivity to ensure equal access for all Canadians to reliable wireless services and high speed internet.

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME]